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<b>Name:</b>	<b>Procurement – CFI Research Projects</b>
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### **Overview**

The Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) is an independent corporation established in 1997 by the Government of Canada. The Foundation's goal is to strengthen the capability of Canadian universities, colleges, research hospitals, and other not-for profit institutions to carry out world-class research and technology development. By investing in research infrastructure projects, the CFI supports research excellence and helps strengthen research training at institutions across Canada.

Procurement Services oversees the acquisition of goods and services on behalf of the University. For CFI projects, the role of Procurement Services is one of a consultative nature assisting the Principal Investigator (PI), the Research Grants Officer (RGO) and other members of the Financial Services team. The process is intended to support the PI with the procurement of required goods and services while ensuring that applicable University and CFI policies and procedures are followed. The process will also ensure that applicable Federal and Provincial legislation governing the acquisition of goods and services is adhered to.

*"The CFI operates on the principle that its funds must be used effectively and economically. To maximize the purchasing power of its investment and to ensure a fair and transparent process, the CFI requires that all purchases follow the usual institutional tendering and purchasing policies and procedures. At a minimum, these must comply with the requirements set forth in Annex 502.4 of the Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT) "*

*A formal competitive process must be performed as per institutional policies. "To help reduce the administrative burden, this process should be performed only once, prior to the actual purchase of the goods. The requirement for a competitive process should be clearly communicated to all involved at the outset. The institution should not make any purchase commitments to suppliers when soliciting price information at the grant proposal or award finalization stages, ensuring that a formal competitive process can be carried out prior to the actual purchase. For items involving in-kind contributions, the institution is also expected to follow its usual policies and procedures."*

*(Excerpt from the CFI Policy and Program Guide published May, 2013)*

While there are many steps involved in the overall CFI process, the following procedure focuses on the final acquisition process and the role of Procurement Services.

## **Procedure**

### **1. Budget Finalization Stage - Consultation with Procurement Services**

Following notification of award, the PI will be required to submit final budget figures to the RGO, obtained as a result of a formal competitive process. The PI must contact Procurement Services who will coordinate the appropriate process (See [Policy Number 4-1013: Procurement Thresholds / Competitive Process](#)) by way of a Tender or a Request for Proposal (RFP). Below is an outline of the steps:

- a) The process cannot be initiated prior to final approval of the funding. Following said approval, the PI should contact Procurement Services to arrange for a meeting to discuss the project requirements.
- b) During the planning phase the PI will be required to provide detailed specifications for the items, the CFI line item number(s) corresponding with the grant application, the mandatory requirements for vendor selection, as well as an evaluation matrix that will establish the weighted criteria to be used when reviewing the proposal responses.
- c) Based on the discussion, Procurement Services will recommend the appropriate competitive process – for example a Request for Proposal (RFP), Tender or Request for an Expression of Interest (REI), etc., and provide assistance
- d) In accordance to the Atlantic Procurement Agreement (APA), Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT) Annex 502.4 (MASH Sector Procurement) and the University's competitive procurement policies (See Section 4-1013 Admin Policy), Procurement Services will advertise the requirement as appropriate. Where thresholds warrant public notification, the University will use the Province of Nova Scotia's public tendering site.

- e) Legislation requires that vendors are given a three week period to submit a response. Sealed submissions are received in the Procurement Services Office until the closing date and time published in the RFP document.
- f) Following the close of the competitive process Procurement Services will review all responses to ensure compliance with the mandatory requirements. Any submissions that do not meet the mandatory requirements will not be further considered.
- g) Procurement Services will then forward responses to the PI (and other evaluators, if applicable) for review. All compliant responses must be evaluated in accordance with the criteria established in step 1b and published in the RFP document. Procurement Services will prepare an evaluation spreadsheet to assist with the scoring of responses and to document the rationale for the award recommendation. Comments / observations are summarized and scores averaged. This information is then referenced in a debriefing session, upon the request of any vendors participating in the process.
- h) The vendor will be selected based on the highest overall score.

If no competitive bidding process is followed, a Sole Supplier Justification Form is required in accordance with the Exception and/or Sole Supplier appendices of the AIT.

## 2. Sole Supplier Justification

As legislated by the Province of Nova Scotia and outlined in the University's institutional policies, a competitive process is mandatory above the thresholds outlined in the Saint Mary's University [Policy Number 4-1013: Procurement Thresholds / Competitive Process](#). Recognizing however that there may be rare circumstances under which a competitive process is not appropriate, a sole supplier justification may be submitted by the PI for consideration. Before proceeding review [Policy Number 4-1024: Procurement – Sole Supplier Justification](#) and complete the Sole Supplier Justification Form – CFI available [online](#).